

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSC-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /070 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7084

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, EAID, MR

SUBJECT: RESIGNATION OF MAURITANIAN MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

REF: (A) 75 NOUAKCHOTT A-62, (B) NOUAKCHOTT 211

1. 'ABDALLAHI OULD DADDAH, MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, GIRM REPRESENTATIVE TO CILSS, AND HALF BROTHER OF PRESIDENT, IS NO LONGER A MEMBER OF MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT. MUHAMMAD OULD 'AMAR, MINISTER WATER RESOURCES, HAS BEEN DESIGNATED ACTING MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

2. EXACT CIRCUMSTANCES OF 'ABDALLAHI OULD DADDAH'S DEPARTURE ARE NOT CLEAR. ONE SENIOR GIRM OFFICIAL OBSERVED TO CDO THAT OULD DADDAH "HAD WITHDRAWN" FROM GIRM CABINET. TWO SEPARATE SOURCES ASSET THAT OULD DADDAH AS EMERGENCY FOOD PROGRAM CHIEF AND MINISTER OF STATE RURAL ADVANCEMENT BARO CLASHED OVER DISTRIBUTION OF DONATED FOODSTUFFS, THAT PRESIDENT INTERVENED IN SUPPORT OF BARO, AND THAT MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT WAS

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GIVEN CHOICE OF KNUCKLING UNDER OR GETTING OUT. REPORTS, HOWEVER, ARE 180 DEGREES APART RE SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS TAKEN BY TWO SENIOR OFFICIALS. WHILE REASONS FOR MINISTER'S DEPARTURE REMAIN UNCLEAR, SEVERAL OBSERVATIONS-- OF FACT AND OF PERSPECTIVE--ARE POSSIBLE: OULD DADDAH HAS BEEN A VERY POOR MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SOME WOULD SAY A "DISASTER"). HE WAS NEVER TERRIBLY IMNERESTED

IN AGRICULTURE; HE CANDIDLY TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD NOT WANTED ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EMERGENCY FOOD AID PROGRAM, HAD ACTIVELY OPPOSED DESIGNATION, BUT ULTIMATELY ACQUIESCED TO HIS BROTHER'S INSISTENCE. MOREOVER, HE WAS REPEATEDLY CALLED ON TO REPRESENT MAURITANIA AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES OR FOR SPECIAL POLITICAL TRAVELS WHICH TOOK HIM AWAY FROM HIS MINISTRY FOR WEEKS AT A TIME. ALTHOUGH OULD DADDAH HAD PERSONALLY WANTED TO LEAVE CABINET AND GO ABROAD AS AN AMBASSADOR PRIOR TO AUGUST 1975 RE-SHUFFLE, HE ULTIMATELY AGREED TO TAKE ANOTHER MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENT IN ORDER TO PERMIT HIS WIFE, TUKIYA, TO REMAIN AT HE POST AS DIRECTOR NATIONAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. BOTH WERE DEVASTATED BY SUICIDE OF THEIR TEEN-AGE DAUGHTER. RESULT OF THIS ACCUMULATION WAS OULD DADDAH PRESIDED OVER AN INCREASINGLY MORE IMMOBILE AND DEMORALIZED MINISTRY AS 1976 ROLLED BY. IN PAST YEAR, TURKIYA HAS ENCOUNTERED MORE AND MORE PROBLEMS AT ENA, AND LATE IN 1976 TOLD EMBOFF SHE HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO TRAIN HER SUCCESSOR SO SHE COULD DEPART BEFORE 1977-78 ACADEMIC YEAR. ROUGHLY WEEK AGO IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT ENA BUDGET OFFICER, ONE OF TURKIYA'S MOST TRUSTED HZTAFFERS, HAD DECAMPED WITH SEVERAL TENS OF THOUSANDS OF ENA DOLLARS EMBEZZLED OVER PAST 12-15 MONTHS. SINCE TURKIYA IS TECHNICALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSS, AND FUN REMAINING HAS CLEARLY DISAPPEARED FROM HER ENA JOB--AND THUS ANY MOTIVATION FOR CONVINCING HER HUSBAND TO STAY ON DESPITE HIS PERSONAL PREFERENCES. FINALLY, RE FUTURE: IT IS GENERALLY AGREED THAT OULD DADDAH WILL BE SENT ABROAD AS AMBASSADOR.

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3. SINCE WORD OF OULD DADDAH'S "WITHDRAWAL" ONLY BECAME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE ON FRIDAY (MARCH 484 RUMOR CIRCUIT HAS ONLY BEGUN TOUTING SUCCESSORS. VIRTUALLY ANYONE WOULD BE AN IMPROVEMENT. BUT PRIME CANDIDATE IS DR. 'ABDALLAHI OULD SOUEID AHMED, FORMER DIRECTOR ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND NOW EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL ADVANCEMENT, WHO REPORTEDLY WAS CONSIDERED FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY IN AUGUST 1975. IF DR. SOUEID SHOULD BE DESIGNATED MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORT MIGHT BE GALVANIZED INTO UNPRECEDENTED ACTIVITY. NEVERTHELESS, OULD DADDAH'S CAREFULLY AND PATIENTLY DEVELOPED UNDERSTANDING OF US RURAL ASSESSMENT STUDY PROPOSAL HAS BEEN LOST, AND WILL HAVE TO PAINSTAKINGLY RECREATED IN CONSCIOUSNESS OF NEW MINISTER WHOEVER HE TURNS OUT TO BE.

HANDYSIDE

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Message Attributes

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